

THE STATUS OF THE RIFFLE BEETLE GENUS *LARA* AND HOMONYMY OF THE SUBFAMILY GROUP NAME LARINAE (COLEOPTERA: ELMIDAE)¹

Paul J. Spangler²

ABSTRACT: An homonymy exists between Larinae (Coleoptera: Elmidae) and Larinae (Aves: Laridae). There is a need to eliminate this homonymy and a name change to Larainae is being proposed to the I.C.Z.N.

The family Elmidae (Shuckard, 1839), as we recognize it today, has undergone numerous changes in its classification since its inception. Although most of those changes involved the family name, another change involving the name of one of the two subfamilies is now needed. The family Elmidae is presently divided into two subfamilies, the Elminae and the Larinae. When LeConte (1852) published his synopsis of the "Parnidae" of the United States, he described the genus *Lara* which he placed in a "Div. 2. Dryopini Er." When LeConte (1861) next referred to the genus *Lara* he divided the "Parnidae" into three subfamilies, the "Psephenidae," the "Parnidae," and the "Elmidae." At that time he designated and included a key to two tribes, the "Larini" and the "Parnini." The tribe Larini was based solely on his genus *Lara*.

LeConte's tribe Larini was later raised to a family "Lariidae" by Böving (1929) following his study of the larva of *Lara*. However, a few years later in their extensive study of larval Coleoptera, Böving and Craighead (1931) reduced the Lariidae to a subfamily "Larinae" where it has remained to the present time. However, the use of the homonymous subfamily group name Larinae cannot be maintained in Coleoptera because it is currently and correctly used in Aves and has been since Bonaparte (1831) erected the family name "Laridae" and the subfamily "Larinae" based on the nominotypic genus *Larus* Linnaeus (1758).

Neave (1939), in his list of generic and subgeneric names, cited the use of *Lara* by Drapiez (1819) as a generic name for Hymenoptera. However, Pate (1937) and Bohart and Menke (1976) regarded its use by Drapiez as either a lapsus calami or a typographical error. Furthermore, because Drapiez's use of *Lara* cannot be demonstrated to be an emendation of the

¹Received January 12, 1986. Accepted February 6, 1986.

²Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. 20560

generic name *Larra* Fabricius (1793), it has no standing according to the Code (Art. 33c) (1985), and *Lara* LeConte is not preoccupied by *Lara* Drapiez.

Because the stems of the similar generic names *Lara* LeConte (Insecta) and *Larus* Linnaeus (1758) (Aves), as well as several other generic names listed by Neave, would be homonymous in forming family group names, I am submitting a request to the Commission to rule that the stem of *Lara*, for the purposes of Article 29, should be changed from *Lar-* to *Lara-*. Therefore, the subfamily name for the elmids would be Larainae. This would be in agreement with the previous decision (Opinion 140) made by the Commission in the case of similar generic names, *Merops* Linnaeus (1758) (Aves) and *Merope* Newman (1838) (Insecta), where the stems were identical and the family group name could not be identical.

Because the name Larinae for the elmids needs to be changed because of the homonymy, and the change is needed now, I am presently using the name Larainae in the hope that the Commission eventually will reach the same decision.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I thank Curtis W. Sabrosky and F. Christian Thompson for their constructive review of this article.

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